

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for interactively replying to voice messages received via a voice communication device, which comprises:
 - a memory, wherein the memory is capable of storing multiple personalized vocal responses and a written synopsis of each stored, personalized vocal response;
 - a store/playback device connected to the memory, wherein the store/playback device is capable of storing the personalized vocal responses in the memory; and
 - a system control circuit connected to the store/playback device, wherein the system control circuit is capable of communication with the voice communication device, has capability to select a specified stored, personalized vocal response in reply to a playback command initiated by a user, and has capability to playback, via the system control circuit, the specified stored, personalized vocal response to the voice communication device in reply to the command.
2. The apparatus as recited in claim 1 further comprising a visual display connected to the system control circuit, wherein the visual display is capable of displaying the written synopsis of the specified stored, personalized vocal response.
3. The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the system control circuit has capability to further select a record mode in reply to a record mode

- 4 command initiated by the user, wherein in record mode the record/playback device is capable of recording the personalized vocal responses into the memory.
- 2 4. The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein by system control circuit has capability to further select a review mode in reply to a review mode command initiated by the user, wherein in review mode the
- 4 record/playback device is capable of playing back the personalized vocal responses for review by the user.
- 2 5. The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the user has capability of issuing the playback command via controls on the system control circuit.
- 2 6. The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the user has capability of issuing the playback command via the voice communication device.
- 2 7. The apparatus as recited in claim 6, wherein the voice communication device is a telephone.
- 2 8. The apparatus as recited in claim 7, wherein the telephone is capable of wireless operation.
- 2 9. The apparatus as recited in claim 7, wherein the telephone is a cellular telephone.
- 2 10. The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the voice communication device is a telephone.
- 2 11. The apparatus as recited in claim 10, wherein the telephone is capable of wireless operation.

- 2 12. The apparatus as recited in claim 10, wherein the telephone is a cellular telephone.
- 2 13. The apparatus as recited in claim 10, wherein the messages are received via the telephone connected to a telephone system.
- 2 14. The apparatus as recited in claim 13, wherein system control circuit adjustment is effected via actuating at least one switch on the telephone.
- 2 15. The apparatus as recited in claim 14, wherein the switch on the telephone is a push-button.
- 2 16. A method, which comprises the method steps of:
- 4 receiving a voice message from a caller via a voice communication device connected to a voice communication system;
- 6 selecting a personalized vocal response, wherein the personalized vocal response is selected from multiple personalized vocal responses
- 8 previously stored in a memory and wherein the selected personalized vocal response is chosen based upon the content of the voice message
- 10 received;
- 12 playing back the selected personalized vocal response to the voice communication device; and
- 14
- 16 repeating the above method steps until the caller disconnects from the voice communication system.

17. The method as recited in claim 16, which further comprises the steps of:

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selecting a record mode in reply to a record mode command initiated by
the user; and

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when in record mode, recording the personalized vocal responses into the
memory.

18. The method as recited in claim 16, which further comprises the steps of:

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selecting a review mode in reply to a review mode command initiated by
the user; and

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when in review mode, playing back the personalized vocal responses for
review.

19. The method as recited in claim 16, providing the playback command is
issued via controls on a system control circuit connected to a
store/playback device.

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20. The method as recited in claim 16, providing the playback command is
issued via controls on the voice communication device.

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21. The method as recited in claim 16, providing the voice communication
device is a telephone.

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22. The method as recited in claim 21, providing the telephone is capable of
wireless operation.

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23. The method as recited in claim 21, providing the telephone is a cellular

2 telephone.

24. The method as recited in claim 21, providing the messages are received
2 via the telephone connected to a telephone system.

25. The method as recited in claim 21, providing system control circuit
2 adjustment is effected via actuating at least one switch on the telephone.

26. The method as recited in claim 25, providing the switch on the telephone
2 is a push-button.

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